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INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATING
COMMITTEE FOR A FRAMEWORK
CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE
Seventh session
New York, 15-19(20) March 1993
Item 1 (b) of the provisional agenda

PROVISIONAL AGENDA AND ANNOTATIONS, INCLUDING SUGGESTIONS FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF WORK: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Note by the Executive Secretary

The attached letter (see annex) has a bearing on the work of the Committee at its current and future sessions. It is suggested that the implications of this letter, in particular its last paragraph, could be considered by the Committee in connection with item 5 of the provisional agenda.

ANNEX

Letter dated 1 March 1993 from the Chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change addressed to the Chairman of the Committee

As I informed the Committee in December 1992, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is in the process of deciding on its work-plan for the next two and a half years. It has decided to complete its Second Assessment of the issue of climate change by September 1995. It has further decided to prepare a special report for the first session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP-1), expecting it to take place in the latter part of 1994 or in early 1995; this special report will be on issues of importance for the agenda items for the session and should be completed in mid-1994.

The IPCC Working Group I has accordingly decided to prepare four chapters for the special report on:

a. carbon cycle

b. atmospheric chemistry

c. atmospheric aerosols

d. radiative forcing.

Furthermore, work is in progress to develop a comparable methodology or methodologies for the assessment of greenhouse gases sources and sinks in order to provide common means to be used by those countries wishing to do so in the preparation of their reports to the first session of the Conference of the Parties. It should, however, be emphasized that this is not an easy task. The IPCC is, obviously, anxious to present methods that have been tested and are scientifically acceptable and is attempting to do its best in meeting the needs implicit in the Convention text. A report on this subject is expected in early 1994.

So far, there have been no plans by the reorganized IPCC Working Group II to initiate similar early assessments. The reorganized IPCC Working Group III will not have its first meeting until early May this year and will therefore hardly be in a position to complete any reviews to be included in the special report for COP-1.

The IPCC is presently modifying its review procedures for carrying out scientific/technical assessments, making them more stringent, and these procedures will necessarily require more time. This is, however, most important in order to assure that the final IPCC assessments are credible in the eyes of the scientific community and accordingly of best possible use to policy makers in the activities within the Committee and later the Conference of the Parties to the Convention.

I reaffirm that the IPCC is anxious to respond as well as possible to the views and requests from the Committee. But I also wish to inform the delegates here that work on any assessments that are not envisaged in the plan described above (namely the IPCC Second Assessment Report and the special report for COP-1) must begin immediately after the next IPCC session (Geneva, 29-30 June 1993), if they are to be part of the special report. Also, requests for extensive assessments can hardly be completed in time.

I know that the Committee may not conclude its discussions relevant to, for example, the methodologies for greenhouse gases sources and sinks until August 1993. Nevertheless, the IPCC and I would be grateful if any requests or indications thereof from the Committee can be transmitted to the IPCC by the end of May this year in order to permit discussions and a decision at the next session of the IPCC in June.

(Signed) Bert BOLIN
Chairman, IPCC